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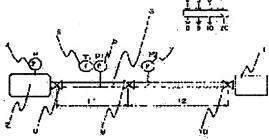
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(54) FAILURE DIAGNOSTIC SYSTEM OF SUPPLY SWITCHING VALVE

(57) Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To provide a system for making a quick failure diagnosis of supply switching valves at start-up.

SOLUTION: The system is provided with a first switching valve 8 fitted to a fuel gas supply pipe 3 supplying fuel gas, a second switching valve 9 fitted at a downstream of the first switching valve 8, and a first pressure sensor 6 detecting pressure of the fuel gas between the first and the second switching valves 8, 9. The system is further provided with a stop-period switching valve operation part closing the first switching valve 8 and the second switching valve 9 by turns at a stop period, a stop-period memory treatment part memorizing an output of the first



pressure sensor 6 at a stop period, and a failure diagnostic part judging on failure of the first and the second switching valves 8, 9 by comparing outputs of the first pressure sensor 6 at the stop period and an operation restart period.

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CLAIMS

[Claim(s)]

[Claim 1]

The fuel cell which generates electricity using fuel gas,

The fuel gas holder which stores the fuel gas supplied to said fuel cell,

The fuel gas charging line which supplies fuel gas to said fuel cell from said fuel gas holder,

The first closing motion valve arranged to said fuel gas charging line,

The second closing motion valve arranged to the downstream of said first closing motion valve along the flow direction of fuel gas,

The first pressure sensor which detects the pressure of the fuel gas between said first closing motion valves and said second closing motion valves,

It is a closing motion valve control unit at the time of a halt which closes said second closing motion valve after closing said first closing motion valve at the time of said fuel cell halt,

It is the pressure storage section at the time of a halt at the time of said fuel cell halt which memorizes the output of said first pressure sensor at least,

The troubleshooting system of the supply closing motion valve characterized by to have the troubleshooting section which judges whether the output of said first pressure sensor at the time of the resumption of operation after said fuel cell halt and the output of said first pressure sensor at the time of said fuel cell halt memorized in the pressure storage section at the time of said halt are measured, and either [at least] said first closing motion valve or said second closing motion valve is out of order.

[Claim 2]

It has the third closing motion valve between said second closing motion valves and said fuel cells, The troubleshooting system of the supply closing motion valve according to claim 1 which closes said third closing motion valve in a closing motion valve control unit at the time of said halt after closing said second closing motion valve.

[Claim 3]

The feed zone pressure sensor which measures the pressure of said fuel gas holder,

The second pressure sensor which detects the pressure of the fuel gas between said second closing motion valves and said third closing motion valves,

It has a closing motion valve-control means at the time of a halt which sets up the timing which closes said first closing motion valve, said second closing motion valve, and said third closing motion valve,

The troubleshooting system of the supply closing motion valve according to claim 2 which closes said first closing motion valve, said second closing motion valve, and said third closing motion valve by the closing motion valve control unit according to the timing set up with the closing motion valve-control means according to the output of said feed zone pressure sensor, said first pressure sensor, and said second pressure sensor at the time of said halt at the time of a fuel cell halt at the time of said halt.

[Claim 4]

The troubleshooting system of the supply closing motion valve [equipped with the halt processing judging section which determines whether perform halt actuation by the closing motion valve control unit at the time of said halt based on the condition of the fuel gas stored in said fuel gas holder]

according to claim 1.

[Claim 5]

It has the feed zone pressure sensor which measures the pressure of said fuel gas holder, Said halt processing judging section is the troubleshooting system of the supply closing motion valve according to claim 4 it is judged that performs halt actuation when the output of said feed zone pressure sensor is beyond a predetermined value.

[Claim 6]

The feed zone pressure sensor which measures the pressure of said fuel gas holder,

A temperature detection means to detect or guess change of the temperature of at least one fuel gas in said fuel gas holder or said fuel gas charging line,

The troubleshooting system of a supply closing motion valve [equipped with the troubleshooting judging section which judges whether troubleshooting in said troubleshooting section is performed based on the pressure and temperature of fuel gas at the time of the resumption of operation after said fuel cell halt] according to claim 1.

[Claim 7]

It is the troubleshooting system of the supply closing motion valve according to claim 6 which sets in said troubleshooting judging section and the output of said temperature detection means at the time of the last halt, the output of said temperature detection means at the time of the resumption of operation of said fuel cell, and the difference of ** judge does not perform troubleshooting in said troubleshooting section in beyond a predetermined value.

[Claim 8]

The troubleshooting system of the supply closing motion valve according to claim 1 which equips with one or more said fuel gas service tanks, and is equipped with said first closing motion valve and said second closing motion valve at least for said every fuel gas service tank.

[Claim 9]

Said first closing motion valve, said second closing motion valve, and the first temperature sensor formed between **s.

The troubleshooting system of the supply closing motion valve according to claim 1 which performs pressure correction based on the output of said first temperature sensor at the time of the last halt, and the output of the first temperature sensor at the time of the resumption of operation of said fuel cell in case a judgment in said troubleshooting decision section is made.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[Industrial Application]

This invention relates to the fault read-out unit of a fuel cell system. It is related with the system which performs troubleshooting of a supply closing motion valve by performing a leakage diagnosis of the supply closing motion valve of a fuel gas distribution system especially. [0002]

[Description of the Prior Art]

There are some which were indicated by JP,9-22711,A as a fault read-out unit of the supply closing motion valve of conventional fuel gas. This equips with the first closing motion valve and the second closing motion valve from the upstream the fuel gas charging line which supplies fuel gas to a fuel cell, and is further equipped with the hydrogen-gas-pressure force sensor which measures the pressure between the first closing motion valve and the second closing motion valve. Where the first closing motion valve and the second closing motion valve are closed at the time of starting, troubleshooting of the first closing motion valve is performed from the gas pressure which a hydrogen-gas-pressure force sensor detects. Then, after only predetermined time opens the first closing motion valve, it closes again, and troubleshooting of the second closing motion valve is performed from the gas pressure which a hydrogen-gas-pressure force sensor detects after predetermined time progress from clausilium.

[0003]

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Invention]

However, since it is necessary to supply gas to a fuel gas charging line in order to detect leakage, when already out of order at the time before starting, the failure under shutdown cannot be detected until it starts fuel supply. Moreover, since it is necessary to secure diagnostic time amount in case troubleshooting is performed before starting, the time amount to transit or a start up will extend. [0004]

Then, this invention aims at offering the troubleshooting system [out of order / promptly / system / at the time of starting / valve / supply closing motion] of a supply closing motion valve. [0005]

[Means for Solving the Problem]

The fuel gas holder which stores the fuel cell with which this invention generates electricity using fuel gas, and the fuel gas supplied to said fuel cell, The fuel gas charging line which supplies fuel gas to said fuel cell from said fuel gas holder, It has the first pressure sensor which detects the pressure of the fuel gas between the first closing motion valve arranged to said fuel gas charging line, the second closing motion valve arranged to the downstream of said first closing motion valve along the flow direction of fuel gas, and said first closing motion valve and said second closing motion valve. At the time of a halt which closes said second closing motion valve after closing said first closing motion valve at the time of said fuel cell halt, furthermore, a closing motion valve control unit, At the time of a halt which memorizes the output of said first pressure sensor at the time of said fuel cell halt, the pressure storage section, The output of said first pressure sensor at the time of the resumption of operation after said fuel cell halt, and the output of said first pressure sensor at the time of said halt, It

compares and has the troubleshooting section which judges whether either [at least] said first closing motion valve or said second closing motion valve is out of order. [0006]

[Function and Effect]

The pressure in a fuel charging line is measured at the time of a fuel cell halt, and it judges whether as compared with the time of a fuel cell restart, either [at least] the first closing motion valve or the second closing motion valve is out of order from the comparison result in the pressure at the time of a fuel cell halt, and the pressure at the time of resumption of operation. Thereby, failure can be detected, without supplying fuel gas to a fuel cell. Moreover, it is not necessary to wait for transit or a start up for troubleshooting. Thereby, troubleshooting of the first closing motion valve and the second closing motion valve can be promptly performed at the time of starting.

[Embodiment of the Invention]

The troubleshooting structure of a system of the supply closing motion valve (the first and second closing motion valves 8 and 9 mentioned later here) used for this operation gestalt is shown in <u>drawing 1</u>.

[8000]

To a fuel cell 1, a fuel distribution system to fuel gas is supplied for oxidant gas from the oxidant gas distribution system which is not illustrated again, and it generates electricity to it by producing electrochemical reaction between the oxygen in the oxidant gas, and the hydrogen in fuel gas. [0009]

As a fuel distribution system, it has the fuel gas holder 2 which is a storage tank of fuel gas, and the fuel gas charging line 3 which is the circulation way of fuel gas, and fuel gas is supplied to a fuel cell 1 through the fuel gas charging line 3 from the fuel gas holder 2. Moreover, to the fuel gas charging line 3, the first closing motion valve 8, the second closing motion valve 9, and the third closing motion valve 10 are arranged from the upstream along the flow direction of fuel gas. Here, for a start, the second closing motion valves 8 and 9 adjust supply and a halt of fuel gas, and the third closing motion valve 10 is adjusted so that the pressure of the fuel electrode of a fuel cell 1 may be kept constant.

[0010]

The first volume section 11 formed by a part of fuel gas charging line 3 between the first closing motion valve 8 and the second closing motion valve 9 is equipped with the first temperature sensor 5 and the first pressure sensor 6, and the temperature T1 and the pressure P1 in the first volume section 11 are made it detectable. Moreover, the second volume section 12 formed from a part of fuel gas charging line 3 between the second closing motion valve 9 and the third closing motion valve 10 is equipped with the second pressure sensor 7, and the pressure P2 of the second volume section 12 is made it detectable. Furthermore, a pressure sensor 4 is formed also in the fuel gas holder 2, and the pressure Pt in a tank is made it detectable.

[0011]

In such a troubleshooting system, it has a controller 20, and the first - 3 closing-motion valves 8-10 are controlled from the output of each sensor, and troubleshooting of the second closing motion valves 8 and 9 is performed for a start at the time of starting.

[0012]

Next, the control approach by the controller 20 of the troubleshooting system of such a supply closing motion valve is explained. It constitutes from the halt processing section which shows the control approach of this operation gestalt to <u>drawing 2</u> performed in case operation of a fuel cell 1 is suspended, and the diagnostic-process section shown in drawing 3 performed in case operation of a

[0013]

fuel cell 1 is started.

First, <u>drawing 2</u> is used and the control approach of the halt processing section at the time of a halt of a fuel cell 1 is explained.

[0014]

If the command of the shutdown of a fuel cell 1 is outputted, it will progress to the halt processing judging section of step S1. In this halt processing judging section, it judges whether halt processing

for performing troubleshooting of a supply closing motion valve at the time of next starting is performed, and control as shown in <u>drawing 4</u> in fact is performed.
[0015]

In <u>drawing 4</u>, if the command of halt processing section initiation is received, it will progress to step S7 and will judge whether the pressure Pt in the fuel gas holder 2 is larger than the predetermined value DGNPt. If larger than the predetermined value DGNPt, it will progress to step S8, and it is judged as halt processing flag FDGNV=1 that halt processing is performed. On the other hand, in step S7, if a pressure Pt is below the predetermined value DGNPt, it will progress to step S9, and it is judged as halt processing flag FDGNV=0 that halt processing is not performed.

Here, when the pressure in the fuel gas holder 2 is small, even if it performs halt processing mentioned later, the difference of the pressure in the fuel gas holder 2, the first volume section 11, and the second volume section 12 will become small. In such a case, even when there is no fuel gas leakage, it is easy to be influenced by the environmental variation, and it may be accidentally judged that the supply closing motion valve is out of order. So, when such a misdiagnosis may be carried out and the pressure in the fuel gas holder 2 is below the predetermined value DGNPt here, it will set up, if a failure judgment is not made at the time of next starting, and a fuel cell 1 is stopped as it is. [0017]

Thus, if a halt processing judging is performed, it will progress to the halt processing control unit of step S2 in <u>drawing 2</u>. In a halt processing control unit, processing for performing troubleshooting of a supply closing motion valve at the time of next starting is performed, and it controls to be shown in the flow chart of <u>drawing 5</u> in fact.

In step S10 of <u>drawing 5</u>, it judges whether the halt processing flag FDGNV for which it asked in the halt processing judging section (<u>drawing 2</u> S1) is 1. Since halt processing will not be performed if the halt processing flag FDGNV is judged not to be 1, it progresses to step S15, the first - 3 closing-motion valves 8-10 are closed to coincidence, and the control in a halt processing control unit is ended. It is not this limitation although [here] the first - 3 closing-motion valves 8-10 are closed to coincidence.

[0019]

[0018]

On the other hand, when the halt processing flag FDGNV is 1 in step S10, it progresses to step S11 and the timing tm1 which closes the first closing motion valve 8 is computed. How to ask for this timing tm1 is shown in <u>drawing 6</u>.

[0020]

If the command which computes tm1 is checked, if support of lock out of a supply closing motion valve comes out, in step S26, it will be set as tm1=0 so that the first closing motion 8 may be blockaded immediately that is,. Thus, if tm1 is set up in step S11 ($\underline{drawing 6}$), it will progress to step S12.

[0021]

In step S12, the timing tm2 which closes the second closing motion valve 9 is computed. The calculation approach of timing tm2 is explained using the flow chart shown in <u>drawing 7</u>. [0022]

If the command which asks for timing tm2 is checked, it will progress to step S17, and the pressure P2 of the second volume section 12 reads the setting pressure TGP2 of the target which finally settles down. This is the pressure of the fuel electrode of the fuel cell 1 under shutdown. [0023]

step S18 -- progressing -- the difference of the pressure Pt of the current fuel gas holder 2, and the setting pressure of the second volume section 12 -- deltaDP (=Pt-TGP2) is calculated. the difference which progresses to step S19 and is shown in <u>drawing 8</u> -- it asks for timing tm2 from the map in which the timing tm2 to deltaDP is shown. Here, for example on the map of <u>drawing 8</u>, it is set to P1=TGP2+ (Pt-TGP2) / 2 beforehand calculated by experiment etc., that is, the timing tm2 from which P1 becomes the mean value of Pt and TGP2 is shown. Although it is asking for timing tm2 on the map here, it is good also considering the time of carrying out the monitor of the output of the first pressure sensor 6, and being set to P1=TGP2+ (Pt-TGP2) / 2 as timing tm2.

[0024]

If it asks for timing tm2 in step S13 (<u>drawing 7</u>), it will progress to step S14 of <u>drawing 5</u>. It asks for the timing tm3 which closes the third closing motion valve 10 at step S14. It asks for timing tm3 using the flow chart shown in <u>drawing 9</u>. [0025]

If the command which asks for timing tm3 is checked, it will progress to the <u>drawing 9</u> step S20, and the time of the pressure P2 of the first volume section 12 turning into a setting pressure TGP2 will be set up with timing tm3. That is, the output of the second pressure sensor 7 is detected and let the time of the value being set to TGP2 be the timing tm3 which closes the third closing motion valve 10. [0026]

If timing tm3 is set up in step S13 (<u>drawing 9</u>), it will progress to step S14 of <u>drawing 5</u>, and the first - 3 closing-motion valves 8-10 will be closed according to each timing 1-tm 3 for which it asked in steps S11-S13.

[0027]

Thus, if control of the halt processing control unit in step S2 (<u>drawing 5</u>) is completed, it will progress to step S3, and the storage processing section is performed at the time of a halt. Here, control as shown in <u>drawing 10</u> is performed.

[0028]

That is, when receiving a command so that storage processing may be started at the time of a halt, memory is made to memorize the pressure Pt in the fuel gas holder 2, the pressure P1 in the first volume section 11 and temperature T1, the pressure P2 in the second volume section 12, and the halt processing flag FDGNP in step S21 of drawing 10. [0029]

Thus, if control of the storage processing section is ended at the time of a halt, the halt processing in drawing 2 will be ended. Here, the example of the timing chart at the time of operating halt processing as shown in drawing 2 is shown in drawing 14.

[0030]

If the first closing motion valve 8 is closed when the pressure in the fuel gas holder 2 is higher than the predetermined pressure DGNPt, compared with the pressure P1 in the fuel gas holder 2, the pressure of the downstream (the first and second volume sections 11 and 12) will become low from the first closing motion valve 8. Since, as for this, hydrogen is consumed also at this time with the fuel cell 1, fuel gas is because it is flowing toward the fuel cell 1. Similarly, if the second closing motion valve 9 is closed, the pressure of the downstream (the second volume section 12) of the second closing motion valve 9 will decline further to the pressure of the first volume section 11 maintaining the pressure at the time. Then, the pressure of the second volume section 12 maintains the pressure at the time of closing the third closing motion valve 10 by closing the third closing motion valve 10. Therefore, Pt>P1>P2 are maintained when there is no failure of the first - 3 closing-motion valves 8-10. Here, timing tm2 is set up so that Pt and the differential pressure of P1, P1, and P2 may become almost the same.

[0031]

Next, the troubleshooting approach performed at the time of starting of a fuel cell 1 is explained using the flow chart of $\frac{1}{2}$. [0032]

It calls according to the flow chart which shows storage memory to <u>drawing 11</u> in step S4. If the command of a call of storage memory is received, the value which progressed to step S22 and had been memorized in memory will be called. Here, the value Pt which memory was made to memorize in step S21 of <u>drawing 10</u>, i.e., the pressure in the fuel gas holder 2, the pressure P1 in the first volume section 11 and temperature T1, the pressure P2 in the second volume section 12, and the halt processing flag FDGNP are read. In step S23, in order to use each value for an operation, it applies to variables MPt, MP1, MP2, and MT1 and MFDGNP.

If storage memory is called in step S4 (<u>drawing 11</u>), it will progress to step S5. In the troubleshooting judging section of step S5, it judges whether troubleshooting is performed according to control as shown in <u>drawing 12</u>.

[0034]

In step S24 of <u>drawing 12</u>, absolute value |T1-MT1| of the temperature gradient of the temperature T1 of the first volume section 11 and the temperature MT 1 of the first volume section 11 memorized in memory is compared with the predetermined value DGNT1. If absolute value |T1-MT1| is larger than DGNT1, it will progress to step S27, and it sets up so that troubleshooting may not be performed as diagnostic authorization flag FDGNP=0.

On the other hand, if absolute value |T1-MT1| is one or less DGNT, it will progress to step S25, and the comparison with the pressure Pt of the fuel gas holder 2 and the pressure MPt of the fuel gas holder 2 memorized in memory is performed. It judges whether by this, by the time it started starting from a halt last time this time, the fuel gas holder 2 was supplemented with fuel gas. If the difference (Pt-MPt) of a current pressure and the last pressure is larger than the predetermined value DGNPF, it will judge that fuel gas was filled up and will progress to step S27, and it sets up so that troubleshooting may not be performed as diagnostic authorization flag FDGNP=0. On the other hand, with [(Pt-MPt)] DGNPF [below], it sets up so that it may judge that the supplement is not performed, it may progress to step S25 and troubleshooting may be performed as diagnostic authorization flag FDGNP=1.

[0036]

When the temperature at the time of starting is greatly separated to the temperature at the time of the last halt, irrespective of the condition [valve / supply closing motion] of leakage, change of a pressure may become large and it may be judged that the supply closing motion valve is out of order accidentally. Then, when absolute value |T1-MT1| is one or less DGNT, troubleshooting is performed, and when other, starting is started here [the range and here] where the effect of troubleshooting on pressure variation can be disregarded, without performing troubleshooting. Therefore, the temperature used as a decision criterion may be judged at the temperature of the fuel gas not only the output of the first temperature sensor 5 but in the fuel gas holder 2 etc. Moreover, it judges whether fuel gas was filled up during the halt, and when supplied with seeing change of the pressure in the fuel gas holder 2, starting of a fuel cell 1 is started by it, without performing troubleshooting.

[0037]

If it judges whether troubleshooting is performed in step S5 (<u>drawing 12</u>), it will progress to step S6. In the troubleshooting section of step S6, control as shown in <u>drawing 13</u> is performed.

In step S28, it judges whether it is diagnostic authorization flag FDGNP=1 and MDGNP=1. Since troubleshooting will not be performed if it is not FDNGP=1 and MFDNGP=1, it progresses to step S36 and sets up with failure result flag FDGNOK=1, first closing motion valve failure flag FDGNV 1=0, and second closing motion valve failure flag FDGNV 2=0. Here, it is shown that it is shown whether a failure result flag has failure as a result of a diagnosis, and either [at least] the first closing motion valve 8 or the second closing motion valve 9 has failure if it is FDGNOK=1 and is normal and FDGNOK=0. Moreover, the first closing motion valve failure flag FDGNV1 and the second closing motion valve failure flag FDGNV2 show the troubleshooting result of each supply closing motion valve, and the normal thing is shown, if it is 1 and is those with failure, and 0. That is, when it judges that troubleshooting is not performed in step S28, it judges that it is normal, troubleshooting is ended, and a fuel cell 1 is started.

On the other hand, since it performs troubleshooting in being FDGNP=1 and MFDGNP=1 in step S28, it progresses to step S29. Step S29 amends the pressure P1 of the first volume section 11 at temperature. That is, in consideration of the pressure variation by temperature, the amendment pressure P01 is computed as P01=P1xMT1/T1. In step S30, the pressure P01 which carried out temperature compensation, and the pressure MP 1 memorized in memory are measured. Here, it judges whether they are whether P01 is larger than MP1, and the difference is larger than the predetermined value DPA 1 and P01-MP1>DPA1 that is,. Here, the predetermined value DPA 1 is a value for avoiding the misdiagnosis by an environmental change and an environmental measurement error.

[0040]

If larger than the predetermined value DPA 1, it will be judged that the pressure of the first volume section 11 became high as compared with the time of the last halt. Then, it progresses to step S31, and judges that fuel gas was supplied to the first volume section 11 through the first closing motion valve 8 from the fuel gas holder 2, and this judges that the first closing motion valve 8 is out of order. Then, it is shown that set up with diagnostic result flag FDGNOK=0 and first closing motion valve failure flag FDGNV 1= 1, and the first closing motion valve 8 has failure. Moreover, it sets up with second closing motion valve failure flag FDGNV 2= 0 at this time, and troubleshooting is ended.

[0041]

On the other hand, if it is judged at step S30 that it is not P01-MP1>DPA1, it will progress to step S32, and after judging that there is no failure in FDGNV 1= 08, i.e., the first closing motion valve, it progresses to step S33.

[0042]

Next, in step S33, it judges whether they are whether one is larger than MPP01, and the difference is larger than the predetermined value DPB1 and MP1-P01>DPB1 that is,. Here, the predetermined value DPB1 is also a value for avoiding the misdiagnosis by an environmental change and an environmental measurement error.

[0043]

If larger than the predetermined value DPB1, it will be judged that the pressure of the first volume section 11 became small as compared with the time of the last halt. Then, it progresses to step S34, the fuel gas in the first volume section 11 thinks that it moved to the second volume section 12 with a more low pressure through the second closing motion valve 9, and it is judged that the second closing motion valve 9 is out of order. Then, it sets up with failure result flag FDGNOK=0 and second closing motion valve failure flag FDGNV 2= 1, and troubleshooting is ended. [0044]

On the other hand, if it is not judged that the second closing motion valve 9 is out of order in step S33, it will progress to step S35, it will set up with failure result flag FDGNOK=1 and second closing motion valve failure flag FDGNV 2= 0, and troubleshooting will be ended. [0045]

If the failure result flag FDGNOK which is the above result is 1 and it is normal and 0, it turns out that it is failure. Moreover, when FDGNOK is 0, it is possible to judge which shall be out of order between the first closing motion valve 8 or the second closing motion valve 9 from the result of FDGNV1 and FDGNV2.

[0046]

Next, the effectiveness in this operation gestalt is explained.

[0047]

This operation gestalt is equipped with a fuel cell 1, the fuel gas holder 2, the fuel gas charging line 3 that supplies fuel gas to a fuel cell 1 from the fuel gas holder 2, the first closing motion valve 8 arranged to the fuel gas supply path, the second closing motion valve 9 arranged to the downstream of the first closing motion valve 8, and the first pressure sensor 6 which detects the pressure of the first volume section 11. Moreover, at the time of fuel cell 1 halt, after closing the first closing motion valve 8, it has the storage processing section (S3) at the time of a halt which remembers the output of the first pressure sensor 6 at the time of a halt to be a closing motion valve control unit (S14) at the time of a halt which closes the second closing motion valve 9. Furthermore, the output of the first pressure sensor 6 at the time of the resumption of operation after a halt and the output of the first pressure sensor 6 at the time of a memorized halt are measured, and it has the troubleshooting section (S6) which judges whether either [at least] the first closing motion valve 8 or the second closing motion valve 9 is out of order. Thereby, failure can be detected, without supplying a fuel to a fuel cell 1. Moreover, since it is not necessary to wait for transit or a start up for troubleshooting, prompt troubleshooting can be performed at the time of starting.

Moreover, it has the third closing motion valve 10 between the second closing motion valve 9 and a fuel cell 1, and at the time of a halt, in a closing motion valve control unit (S14), after closing the

second closing motion valve 9, the third closing motion valve 10 is closed. Thus, by having the third closing motion valve 10, when there is no failure, the pressure of the downstream of the second closing motion valve 9 can be maintained uniformly. Thereby, also when pressure variation arises within a fuel cell 1, failure of the second closing motion valve can be judged correctly. [0049]

It has a closing motion valve-control means (S11-S13) at the time of a halt which sets up the pressure sensor 4 which measures the pressure of the fuel gas holder 2, the second pressure sensor 7 which detects the pressure of the second volume section 12, and the timing which closes the first - 3 closing-motion valves 8-10. According to the timing set up according to the output of a pressure sensor 4, the first pressure sensor 6, and the second pressure sensor 7 at the time of a halt, the first - 3 closing-motion valves 8-10 are closed. Thereby, since the differential pressure of the fuel gas holder 2 and the first volume section 11 and the differential pressure of the fuel gas from the first closing motion valve 8 and the second closing motion valve 9 is detectable during a halt. Since it sets up so that the differential pressure of the fuel gas holder 2 and the first volume section 11 and the differential pressure of the first volume section 11 and the differential pressure of the first volume section 11 and the second volume section 12 may become comparable, failure of the second closing motion valves 8 and 9 can be detected similarly for a start especially here.

[0050]

Based on the condition of the fuel gas stored in the fuel gas holder 2, it has the halt processing judging section (S1) which determines whether perform halt actuation. Since halt actuation and troubleshooting can be avoided when next troubleshooting cannot be made exact by this, even if it performs halt actuation, a misdiagnosis can be avoided and useless actuation can be omitted. [0051]

For example, it has the pressure sensor 4 which measures the pressure of the fuel gas holder 2, and when the output of a pressure sensor 4 is beyond a predetermined value, it is judged that halt actuation is performed. When the pressure in the fuel gas holder 2 is low, even if it processes at the time of a halt, since there are few differences with the pressure of the fuel gas holder 2 and first, and 2 volume sections 11 and 12, even when there is no fuel gas leakage, it is easy to be influenced by the environmental variation, and it may be accidentally diagnosed as failure of a supply closing motion valve. Then, this is avoidable by performing halt processing, only when the pressure in the fuel gas holder 2 is beyond a predetermined value.

It has the first temperature sensor 5 here [the temperature detection means and here] where the temperature change of the pressure sensor 4 which measures the pressure of the fuel gas holder 2, and at least one fuel gas in the fuel gas holder 2 or the fuel gas charging line 3 is detected or guessed. Based on the pressure and temperature of fuel gas in front of the resumption of operation after a halt, it has the troubleshooting judging section (S5) which judges whether troubleshooting is performed or not. Thereby, troubleshooting can be avoided, when the condition of fuel gas changes remarkably, it is easy to produce a misdiagnosis with an environmental change etc. and it becomes. Thereby more exact troubleshooting can be performed.

It sets in the troubleshooting judging section (S5), and, in beyond a predetermined value, the difference of the output of the first temperature sensor 5 at the time of the last halt and the output of the first temperature sensor 5 in front of the resumption of operation of a fuel cell 1 does not perform troubleshooting. When the temperature at the time of starting is greatly separated to the temperature at the time of a halt last time, for a start, it may not be based on the second closing motion valve 8 and the condition [nine] of leakage, but change of a pressure may become large, and it may be accidentally judged as failure. Then, a misdiagnosis is avoidable by not performing troubleshooting, when the outputs of the first temperature sensor 5 differ greatly in the time of a halt and starting. [0054]

In case the first temperature sensor 5 is formed between the first closing motion valve 8, the second closing motion valve 9, and ** and it judges in the troubleshooting section (S6), pressure correction is performed based on the output of the first temperature sensor 5 at the time of the last halt, and the

output of the first temperature sensor 5 at the time of resumption of operation. Thereby, a pressure can be measured even when the temperature at the time of starting is changing to the temperature at the time of a halt last time.

[0055]

In addition, although one tank constituted the fuel gas holder 2 from this operation gestalt, you may constitute from two or more tanks. Then, it has the first closing motion valve 8 and the second closing motion valve 9 at least for every tank. Thus, with constituting, troubleshooting of a closing motion valve can be performed irrespective of the number of tanks.

Moreover, when fuel gas is supplied to the fuel gas holder 2 (for example, when it has a fuel reforming system etc. and fuel gas is supplied to the fuel gas holder 2), the halt processing judging section shown in step S1 of <u>drawing 2</u> can also be omitted. Since TGP2 serves as Pt and P2 furthermore serve as about 1 constant value in the case of almost fixed values, such as an outside atmospheric pressure, tm1-tm3 cannot be calculated in step S11-13 of <u>drawing 5</u>, but tm1-tm3 which are set to Pt-P1=P1-P2 in <u>drawing 14</u> can also be beforehand calculated in an experiment etc. [0057]

Thus, it cannot be overemphasized that this invention is not necessarily limited to the gestalt of the above-mentioned implementation, and various modification can accomplish within the range of the technical thought of a publication to a claim.

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[Drawing 1] It is the troubleshooting structure-of-a-system Fig. of the supply closing motion valve in this operation gestalt.

[Drawing 2] It is the flow chart of the halt processing in this operation gestalt.

[Drawing 3] It is the flow chart of the diagnostic process in this operation gestalt.

[Drawing 4] It is the flow chart of the halt processing judging in this operation gestalt.

[Drawing 5] It is the flow chart of the halt processing actuation in this operation gestalt.

[Drawing 6] It is the flow chart of the tm1 calculation in this operation gestalt.

[Drawing 7] It is the flow chart of the tm2 calculation in this operation gestalt.

[Drawing 8] It is the map used for calculating tm2 in the flow chart of drawing 7.

[Drawing 9] It is the flow chart of the tm3 calculation in this operation gestalt.

[Drawing 10] It is the flow chart of storage processing at the time of a halt in this operation gestalt.

[Drawing 11] It is the flow chart of the storage memory call in this operation gestalt.

[Drawing 12] It is the flow chart of the troubleshooting decision in this operation gestalt.

[Drawing 13] It is the flow chart of troubleshooting in this operation gestalt.

[Drawing 14] It is a timing chart at the time of the halt processing in this operation gestalt.

[Description of Notations]

- 1 Fuel Cell
- 2 Fuel Gas Holder
- 3 Fuel Gas Charging Line
- 4 Feed Zone Pressure Sensor (Pressure Sensor)
- 5 First Temperature Sensor (Temperature Detection Means, First Temperature Sensor)
- 6 First Pressure Sensor
- 7 Second Pressure Sensor
- 8 First Closing Motion Valve
- 9 Second Closing Motion Valve
- 10 Third Closing Motion Valve
- 20 Controller
- S1 Halt processing judging section
- S3 It is the storage processing section at the time of a halt.
- S5 Troubleshooting judging section
- S6 Troubleshooting section
- S14 It is a closing motion valve control unit at the time of a halt.
- S11-13 It is a closing motion control means at the time of a halt.

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[Description of Notations]

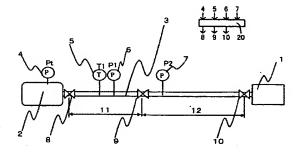
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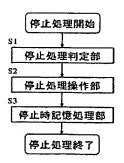
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DRAWINGS

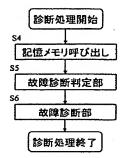
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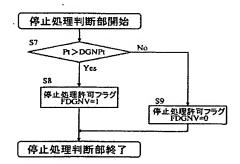
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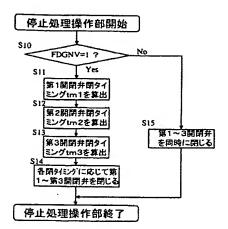
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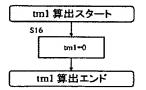
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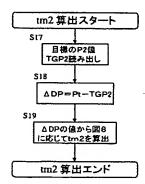
[Drawing 5]



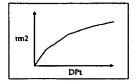
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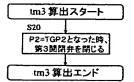
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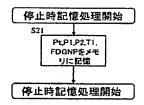
[Drawing 8]



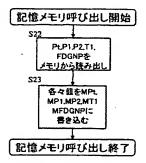
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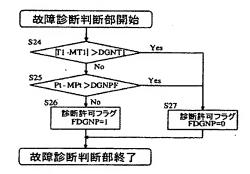
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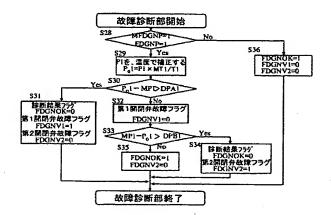
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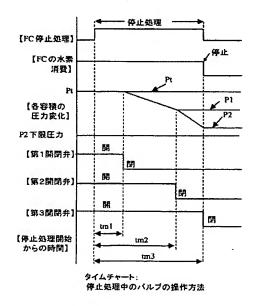
[Drawing 12]



[Drawing 13]



[Drawing 14]



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Fターム(参考) 5H027 AA02 BA13 KK10 KK11 KK44

MM12

(54) 【発明の名称】供給開閉弁の故障診断システム

(57)【要約】

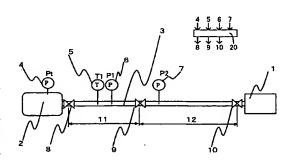
(修正有)

【課題】起動時に速やかな供給開閉弁の故障診断を行う システムを提供する。

【解決手段】燃料ガスを供給する燃料ガス供給配管3に備えた第一開閉弁8、第一開閉弁8の下流に備えた第二開閉弁9、第一、第二開閉弁8、9間の燃料ガスの圧力を検出する第一圧力センサ6を備える。さらに、停止時に第一開閉弁8、第二開閉弁9の順番で閉じる停止時開閉弁操作部、停止時の第一圧力センサ6の出力を記憶する停止時記憶処理部、停止時と運転再開時の第一圧力センサ6の出力を比較して第一、第二開閉弁8、9の故障を判断する故障診断部と、を備える。

【選択図】

図1



【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項1】

燃料ガスを用いて発電を行う燃料電池と、

前記燃料電池に供給する燃料ガスを貯蔵する燃料ガスタンクと、

前記燃料ガスタンクから前記燃料電池に燃料ガスを供給する燃料ガス供給配管と、

前記燃料ガス供給配管に配置した第一開閉弁と、

燃料ガスの流れ方向に沿って前記第一開閉弁の下流側に配置した第二開閉弁と、

前記第一開閉弁と前記第二開閉弁との間の燃料ガスの圧力を検出する第一圧力センサと、 前記燃料電池停止時に、前記第一開閉弁を閉じてから前記第二開閉弁を閉じる停止時開閉 弁操作部と、

前記燃料電池停止時の少なくとも前記第一圧力センサの出力を記憶する停止時圧力記憶部と、

前記燃料電池停止後の運転再開時の前記第一圧力センサの出力と、前記停止時圧力記憶部に記憶した前記燃料電池停止時の前記第一圧力センサの出力と、を比較して、前記第一開閉弁および前記第二開閉弁の少なくとも一方が故障しているかどうかを判断する故障診断部と、を備えたことを特徴とする供給開閉弁の故障診断システム。

【請求項2】

前記第二開閉弁と前記燃料電池の間に第三開閉弁を備え、

前記停止時開閉弁操作部において、前記第二開閉弁をとじてから前記第三開閉弁を閉じる 請求項1に記載の供給開閉弁の故障診断システム。

【請求項3】

前記燃料ガスタンクの圧力を測定する供給部圧力センサと、

前記第二開閉弁と前記第三開閉弁との間の燃料ガスの圧力を検出する第二圧力センサと、 前記第一開閉弁と、前記第二開閉弁と、前記第三開閉弁と、を閉じるタイミングを設定す る停止時開閉弁制御手段と、を備え、

燃料電池停止時に、前記供給部圧力センサと前記第一圧力センサと前記第二圧力センサと の出力に応じて、前記停止時開閉弁制御手段により設定したタイミングに従って前記停止 時開閉弁操作部により前記第一開閉弁、前記第二開閉弁、前記第三開閉弁を閉じる請求項 2 に記載の供給開閉弁の故障診断システム。

【請求項4】

前記燃料ガスタンクに貯蔵された燃料ガスの状態に基づいて、前記停止時開閉弁操作部による停止操作を行うかどうかを決定する停止処理判定部を備えた請求項1に記載の供給開閉弁の故障診断システム。

【請求項5】

前記燃料ガスタンクの圧力を測定する供給部圧力センサを備え、

前記停止処理判定部は、前記供給部圧力センサの出力が所定値以上である場合に停止操作を行うと判断する請求項4に記載の供給開閉弁の故障診断システム。

【請求項6】

前記燃料ガスタンクの圧力を測定する供給部圧力センサと、

前記燃料ガスタンクまたは前記燃料ガス供給配管中の少なくとも一箇所の燃料ガスの温度の変化を検出または推測する温度検出手段と、

前記燃料電池停止後の運転再開時の燃料ガスの圧力と温度に基づいて、前記故障診断部における故障診断を行うかどうかを判断する故障診断判定部と、を備える請求項1に記載の供給開閉弁の故障診断システム。

【請求項7】

前記故障診断判定部において、前回の停止時における前記温度検出手段の出力と、前記燃料電池の運転再開時における前記温度検出手段の出力と、の差が、所定値以上の場合には、前記故障診断部における故障診断は行わないと判断する請求項 6 に記載の供給開閉弁の故障診断システム。

【請求項8】

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前記燃料ガス供給タンクを一つまたは複数装着し、前記燃料ガス供給タンク毎に少なくとも前記第一開閉弁および前記第二開閉弁を備える請求項1に記載の供給開閉弁の故障診断システム。

【請求項9】

前記第一開閉弁と、前記第二開閉弁と、の間に設けた第一温度センサと、

前記故障診断判断部における判断を行う際に、前回の停止時の前記第一温度センサの出力と、前記燃料電池の運転再開時の第一温度センサの出力と、に基づき圧力補正を行う請求項1に記載の供給開閉弁の故障診断システム。

【発明の詳細な説明】

[0001]

【産業上の利用分野】

本発明は、燃料電池システムの故障診断装置に関する。特に、燃料ガス供給システムの供給開閉弁の漏れ診断を行うことにより供給開閉弁の故障診断を行うシステムに関する。

[0002]

【従来の技術】

従来の燃料ガスの供給開閉弁の故障診断装置として、特開平 9 - 2 2 7 1 1 号公報に開示されたようなものがある。これは、燃料電池に燃料ガスを供給する燃料ガス供給配管に、上流側から第一開閉弁、第二開閉弁を備え、さらに、第一開閉弁と第二開閉弁との間の圧力を測定する水素ガス圧力センサを備える。起動時に、第一開閉弁と第二開閉弁とを閉じた状態で、水素ガス圧力センサが検出するガス圧から第一開閉弁の故障診断を行う。続いて、第一開閉弁を所定時間だけ開いてから再び閉じ、閉弁から所定時間経過後に水素ガス圧力センサが検出するガス圧から、第二開閉弁の故障診断を行う。

[0003]

【発明が解決しようとしている問題点】

しかしながら、漏れを検知するためには燃料ガス供給配管にガスを供給しておく必要があるので、起動前の時点で既に故障している場合、例えば、運転停止中の故障は燃料供給を開始するまで検知することができない。また、起動前に故障診断を行う際には診断時間を確保する必要があるので、走行や運転開始までの時間が延長してしまう。

[0004]

そこで、本発明は、起動時に供給開閉弁の故障を速やかに行うことができる供給開閉弁の 故障診断システムを提供することを目的とする。

[0005]

【問題点を解決するための手段】

本発明は、燃料ガスを用いて発電を行う燃料電池と、前記燃料電池に供給する燃料ガスを貯蔵する燃料ガスタンクと、前記燃料ガスタンクから前記燃料電池に燃料ガスを供給する燃料ガス供給配管と、前記燃料ガス供給配管に配置した第一開閉弁と、燃料ガスの流れ方向に沿って前記第一開閉弁の下流側に配置した第二開閉弁と、前記第一開閉弁と前記第二開閉弁と、前記第一開閉弁を閉じてから前記第二開閉弁を閉じる停止時、前記燃料電池停止時の前記第一圧力センサの出力を記憶する停止時圧力記憶部と、前記燃料電池停止時の前記第一圧力センサの出力と、前記停止時圧力記憶部に記憶した前記燃料電池停止時の前記第一圧力センサの出力と、前記停止時圧力記憶部に記憶した前記燃料電池停止時の前記第一圧力センサの出力と、を比較して、前記第一開閉弁および前記第二開閉弁の少なくとも一方が故障しているかどうかを判断する故障診断部と、を備える。

[0006]

【作用及び効果】

燃料電池停止時に燃料供給配管中の圧力を測定し、燃料電池再開時に燃料電池停止時の圧力と運転再開時の圧力とを比較し、その比較結果から第一開閉弁および第二開閉弁の少なくとも一方が故障しているかどうかを判断する。これにより、燃料電池に燃料ガスを供給することなく故障を検知することができる。また、故障診断のために走行や運転開始を待

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つ必要がない。これにより、起動時に第一開閉弁および第二開閉弁の故障診断を速やかに 行うことができる。

- [0007]
- 【発明の実施の形態】

本実施形態に用いる供給開閉弁(ここでは後述する第一、第二開閉弁8、9)の故障診断システムの構成を図1に示す。

[0008]

燃料電池1には、図示しない酸化剤ガス供給システムから酸化剤ガスが、また燃料供給システムから燃料ガスが供給され、その酸化剤ガス中の酸素と燃料ガス中の水素との間で電気化学反応を生じることにより発電を行う。

[0009]

燃料供給システムとしては、燃料ガスの貯蔵タンクである燃料ガスタンク2、燃料ガスの流通路である燃料ガス供給配管3を備え、燃料ガスタンク2から燃料ガス供給配管3を介して燃料電池1に燃料ガスを供給する。また、燃料ガス供給配管3には、燃料ガスの流れ方向に沿って、上流側から第一開閉弁8、第二開閉弁9、第三開閉弁10を配置する。ここで、第一、第二開閉弁8、9は燃料ガスの供給・停止を調整し、第三開閉弁10は、燃料電池1の燃料極の圧力を一定に保つように調整される。

[0010]

第一開閉弁8と第二開閉弁9との間の燃料ガス供給配管3の一部により形成される第一容積部11には、第一温度センサ5、第一圧力センサ6を備え、第一容積部11内の温度T1と圧力P1を検出可能とする。また、第二開閉弁9と第三開閉弁10との間の燃料ガス供給配管3の一部より形成される第二容積部12には、第二圧力センサ7を備え、第二容積部12の圧力P2を検出可能とする。さらに、燃料ガスタンク2にも圧力センサ4を設け、タンク内の圧力Ptを検出可能とする。

[0011]

このような故障診断システムにおいて、コントローラ20を備え、各センサの出力から第一~三開閉弁8~10の制御を行い、また、起動時には第一、第二開閉弁8、9の故障診断を行う。

[0012]

次に、このような供給開閉弁の故障診断システムのコントローラ20による制御方法を説明する。本実施形態の制御方法を、燃料電池1の運転を停止する際に行われる図2に示す停止処理部と、燃料電池1の運転を開始する際に行われる図3に示す診断処理部とから構成する。

[0013]

まず、図2を用いて燃料電池1の停止時における停止処理部の制御方法を説明する。

 $[0\ 0\ 1\ 4\]$

燃料電池1の運転停止の指令が出力されたら、ステップS1の停止処理判定部に進む。この停止処理判定部においては、次回の起動時に供給開閉弁の故障診断を行うための停止処理を行うかどうかを判断し、実際には図4に示すような制御を行う。

[0015]

図4において、停止処理部開始の指令を受けたら、ステップS7に進み、燃料ガスタンク2内の圧力Ptが所定値DGNPtより大きいかどうかを判断する。所定値DGNPtより大きければステップS8に進み、停止処理フラグFDGNV=1として、停止処理を行うと判断する。一方、ステップS7において、圧力Ptが所定値DGNPt以下であればステップS9に進み、停止処理フラグFDGNV=0として、停止処理を行わないと判断する。

[0016]

ここで、燃料ガスタンク2内の圧力が小さい場合には、後述する停止処理を行っても燃料ガスタンク2、第一容積部11、第二容積部12内の圧力の差は小さくなってしまう。このような場合には、燃料ガス漏れがない場合でも環境変化による影響を受けやすく、誤っ

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て供給開閉弁が故障していると判断してしまう可能性がある。そこで、このような誤診をする可能性がある場合、ここでは燃料ガスタンク 2 内の圧力が所定値 D G N P t 以下である場合には、次回の起動時には故障判断を行わないと設定し、そのまま燃料電池 1 を停止する。

[0017]

このように停止処理判定を行ったら、図2においてステップS2の停止処理操作部に進む。停止処理操作部においては、次回の起動時に供給開閉弁の故障診断を行うための処理を行い、実際には図5のフローチャートに示すように制御する。

[0018]

図5のステップS10において、停止処理判定部(図2S1)で求めた停止処理フラグFDGNVが1であるかどうかを判断する。停止処理フラグFDGNVが1ではないと判断されたら停止処理は行わないので、ステップS15に進み第一~三開閉弁8~10を、例えば同時に閉じて停止処理操作部における制御を終了する。ここでは第一~三開閉弁8~10を同時に閉じるとしたが、この限りではない。

[0019]

一方、ステップS10において、停止処理フラグFDGNVが1である場合には、ステップS11に進み、第一開閉弁8を閉じるタイミング t m 1 を算出する。このタイミング t m 1 を求める方法を図6に示す。

[0020]

tm1を算出する指令を確認したら、ステップS26において、供給開閉弁の閉塞の支持がでたら第一開閉8を即座に閉塞するように、つまり、tm1=0に設定する。このようにステップS11(図6)においてtm1を設定したら、ステップS12に進む。

[0021]

ステップS12においては、第二開閉弁9を閉じるタイミングtm2を算出する。タイミングtm2の算出方法を図7に示すフローチャートを用いて説明する。

[0022]

タイミング tm2を求める指令を確認したらステップS17に進み、第二容積部12の圧力P2が最終的に落ち着く目標の設定圧力TGP2を読み出す。これは例えば、運転停止中の燃料電池1の燃料極の圧力である。

[0023]

ステップS18に進み、現在の燃料ガスタンク2の圧力Ptと第二容積部12の設定圧力の差分 Δ DP(=Pt-TGP2)を求める。ステップS19に進み、図8に示す差分 Δ DPに対するタイミング t m 2 を示すマップ等から、タイミング t m 2 を求める。ここでは、例えば図8のマップでは、実験等により予め求めておいたP1=TGP2+(Pt-TGP2)/2となる、つまりP1がPtとTGP2の中間値となるようなタイミング t m 2 を示す。ここではタイミング t m 2 をマップにより求めているが、第一圧力センサ6の出力をモニタし、P1=TGP2+(Pt-TGP2)/2となった時点をタイミング t m 2 としてもよい。

[0024]

ステップS13(図7)においてタイミング t m 2 を求めたら、図 5 のステップS14に 進む。ステップS14では、第三開閉弁10を閉じるタイミング t m 3 を求める。タイミ ング t m 3 を図 9 に示したフローチャートを用いて求める。

[0025]

タイミング t m 3 を求める指令を確認したら、図 9 ステップ S 2 0 に進み、第一容積部 1 2 の圧力 P 2 が設定圧力 T G P 2 になった時をタイミング t m 3 と設定する。つまり、第二圧力センサ 7 の出力を検出し、その値が T G P 2 となった時点を第三開閉弁 1 0 を閉じるタイミング t m 3 とする。

[0026]

ステップS13(図9)においてタイミングtm3を設定したら、図5のステップS14に進み、ステップS11~S13において求めた各タイミングtm1~3に応じて、第一

~三開閉弁8~10を閉じる。

[0027]

このように、ステップS2(図5)における停止処理操作部の制御が終了したらステップS3に進み、停止時記憶処理部を行う。ここでは図10に示すような制御を行う。

[0028]

つまり、停止時記憶処理を開始するように指令を受けたら、図10のステップS21において、燃料ガスタンク2内の圧力Pt、第一容積部11内の圧力P1および温度T1、第 二容積部12内の圧力P2、停止処理フラグFDGNPをメモリに記憶させる。

[0029]

このように停止時記憶処理部の制御を終了したら、図2における停止処理を終了する。こ 10 こで、図2に示すような停止処理の動作を行った場合のタイミングチャートの例を図14 に示す。

[0030]

燃料ガスタンク2内の圧力が所定の圧力DGNPtより高い場合、第一開閉弁8を閉じると、燃料ガスタンク2内の圧力P1に比べて第一開閉弁8より下流側(第一、第二容積部11、12)の圧力が低くなる。これは、この時点でも燃料電池1では水素を消費しているため、燃料ガスは燃料電池1に向かって流れているためである。同様に、第二開閉弁9を閉じると、第一容積部11の圧力はその時点の圧力を維持するのに対して、第二開閉弁9の下流側(第二容積部12)の圧力はさらに低下する。その後、第三開閉弁10を閉じることで、第二容積部12の圧力は第三開閉弁10をとじた時点の圧力を維持する。よって、第一~三開閉弁8~10の故障がない場合にはPt>P1>P2が維持される。ここではPtとP1、P1とP2の圧力差がほぼ同じになるようにタイミングtm2を設定している。

[0031]

次に、燃料電池1の起動時に行う故障診断方法について、図3のフローチャートを用いて 説明する。

[0032]

ステップS4において記憶メモリを図11に示すフローチャートに従って呼び出す。記憶メモリの呼び出しの指令を受けたら、ステップS22に進みメモリに記憶していた値を呼び出す。ここでは、図10のステップS21においてメモリに記憶させておいた値、つまり燃料ガスタンク2内の圧力Pt、第一容積部11内の圧力P1および温度T1、第二容積部12内の圧力P2、停止処理フラグFDGNPを読み出す。ステップS23において、各々の値を演算に使用するために変数MPt、MP1、MP2、MT1、MFDGNPにあてはめる。

[0033]

ステップS4(図11)において記憶メモリを呼び出したら、ステップS5に進む。ステップS5の故障診断判定部では、図12に示すような制御に従って故障診断を行うかどうかを判断する。

[0034]

図12のステップS24において、第一容積部11の温度T1と、メモリに記憶しておいた第一容積部11の温度MT1との温度差の絶対値 | T1-MT1 | と、所定値DGNT1とを比較する。絶対値 | T1-MT1 | がDGNT1より大きければステップS27に進み、診断許可フラグFDGNP=0として故障診断を行わないように設定する。

[0035]

一方、絶対値 | T1-MT1 | がDGNT1以下であればステップS25に進み、燃料ガスタンク2の圧力Ptと、メモリに記憶しておいた燃料ガスタンク2の圧力MPtとの比較を行う。これにより、前回停止から今回起動を開始するまでの間に燃料ガスタンク2に燃料ガスが補充されたかどうかを判断する。現在の圧力と前回の圧力との差(Pt-MPt)が所定値DGNPFより大きければ燃料ガスが補充されたと判断してステップS27に進み、診断許可フラグFDGNP=0として故障診断を行わないように設定する。一方

、(Pt-MPt)がDGNPF以下であれば補充が行われていないと判断してステップS25に進み診断許可フラグFDGNP=1として故障診断を行うように設定する。

[0036]

前回の停止時の温度に対して、起動時の温度が大きく離れているような場合には、供給開閉弁の漏れの状態にかかわらず圧力の変化が大きくなり、誤って供給開閉弁が故障していると判断してしまう可能性がある。そこで、圧力変化の故障診断への影響を無視できる範囲、ここでは絶対値 | T1-MT1 | がDGNT1以下である場合に故障診断を行い、それ以外の時には故障診断を行わずに起動を開始する。そのため、判断基準となる温度は第一温度センサ5の出力に限らず、燃料ガスタンク2内の燃料ガスの温度等で判断してもよい。また、燃料ガスタンク2内の圧力の変化を見ることで、停止中に燃料ガスが補充されたかどうかを判断し、補充された場合には故障診断を行わずに燃料電池1の起動を開始する。

[0037]

ステップS5 (図12) において故障診断を行うかどうかを判断したらステップS6に進む。ステップS6の故障診断部では、図13に示すような制御を行う。

[0038]

ステップS28において診断許可フラグFDGNP=1およびMDGNP=1であるかどうかを判断する。FDNGP=1かつMFDNGP=1でなければ故障診断を行わないので、ステップS36に進み、故障結果フラグFDGNOK=1、第一開閉弁故障フラグFDGNV1=0、第二開閉弁故障フラグFDGNV2=0と設定する。ここで、故障結果フラグは、診断の結果故障があるかどうかを示しており、FDGNOK=1であれば正常、FDGNOK=0であれば第一開閉弁8または第二開閉弁9の少なくとも一方に故障があることを示す。また、第一開閉弁故障フラグFDGNV1、第二開閉弁故障フラグFDGNV2はそれぞれの供給開閉弁の故障診断結果を示しており、1であれば故障あり、0であれば正常であることを示している。つまり、ステップS28において故障診断を行わないと判断した時には、正常であると判断して故障診断を終了し、燃料電池1を起動する

[0039]

一方、ステップS28においてFDGNP=1かつMFDGNP=1である場合には故障診断を行うのでステップS29に進む。ステップS29では、第一容積部11の圧力P1を温度で補正する。つまり、P。1=P1×MT1/T1として、温度による圧力変化を考慮して補正圧力P。1を算出する。ステップS30において、温度補正した圧力P。1とメモリに記憶しておいた圧力MP1とを比較する。ここでは、P。1がMP1より大きく、その差が所定値DPA1より大きいかどうか、つまりP。1-MP1>DPA1であるかどうかを判断する。ここで、所定値DPA1は、環境の変化や測定誤差による誤診を避けるための値である。

[0040]

所定値DPA1より大きければ、前回の停止時に比較して第一容積部11の圧力が高くなったと判断する。そこでステップS31に進み、燃料ガスタンク2から第一開閉弁8を介して第一容積部11に燃料ガスが供給されたと判断し、これにより、第一開閉弁8が故障していると判断する。そこで、診断結果フラグFDGNOK=0、第一開閉弁故障フラグFDGNV1=1、と設定して第一開閉弁8に故障があることを示す。また、このとき第二開閉弁故障フラグFDGNV2=0と設定し、故障診断を終了する。

[0041]

一方、ステップ S 3 0 で P $_0$ 1 $_0$ M P 1 $_2$ D P A 1 ではないと判断されたらステップ S 3 2 に進み、 F D G N V 1 $_2$ 0 、つまり第一開閉弁 8 には故障がないと判断してからステップ S 3 3 に進む。

[0042]

次にステップS33において、MP1が P_0 1より大きく、その差が所定値DPB1より大きいかどうか、つまり、 $MP1-P_0$ 1>DPB1であるかどうかを判断する。ここで

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、所定値DPB1も、環境の変化や測定誤差による誤診を避けるための値である。

[0043]

所定値DPB1より大きければ、前回の停止時に比較して第一容積部11の圧力が小さくなったと判断する。そこでステップS34に進み、第一容積部11内の燃料ガスが、第二開閉弁9を介してより圧力の低い第二容積部12に移動したと考え、第二開閉弁9が故障していると判断する。そこで、故障結果フラグFDGNOK=0、第二開閉弁故障フラグFDGNV2=1と設定し故障診断を終了する。

[0044]

一方ステップ S 3 3 において、第二開閉弁 9 が故障していると判断されなかったら、ステップ S 3 5 に進み、故障結果フラグ F D G N O K = 1、第二開閉弁故障フラグ F D G N V 2 = 0 と設定して故障診断を終了する。

[0045]

以上の結果である故障結果フラグFDGNOKが1なら正常、0なら故障であることが分かる。また、FDGNOKが0の場合には、第一開閉弁8または第二開閉弁9のどちらが故障しているかを、FDGNV1、FDGNV2の結果から判断することが可能である。 【0046】

次に、本実施形態における効果を説明する。

[0047]

本実施形態は、燃料電池1と、燃料ガスタンク2と、燃料ガスタンク2から燃料電池1に燃料ガスを供給する燃料ガス供給配管3と、燃料ガス供給通路に配置した第一開閉弁8と、第一開閉弁8の下流側に配置した第二開閉弁9と、第一容積部11の圧力を検出する第二用閉弁9を閉じる停止時開閉弁操作部(S14)と、停止時の第一圧力センサ6の出力を記憶する停止時記憶処理部(S3)を備える。さらに、停止後の運転再開時の第一圧力センサ6の出力と、記憶した停止時の第一圧力センサ6の出力と、を比較して、第一開閉弁8および第二開閉弁9の少なくとも一方が故障しているかどうかを判断する故障診断部(S6)と、を備える。これにより、燃料電池1に燃料を供給することなく故障を検知することができる。また、故障診断のために走行や運転開始を待つ必要がないので、起動時に速やかな故障診断を行うことができる。

[0048]

また、第二開閉弁9と燃料電池1の間に第三開閉弁10を備え、停止時開閉弁操作部(S14)において、第二開閉弁9を閉じてから第三開閉弁10を閉じる。このように第三開閉弁10を備えることで、故障がないときには第二開閉弁9の下流側の圧力を一定に維持することができる。これにより、燃料電池1内で圧力変化が生じた場合にも、第二開閉弁の故障を正確に判断することができる。

[0049]

燃料ガスタンク2の圧力を測定する圧力センサ4と、第二容積部12の圧力を検出する第二圧力センサ7と、第一~三開閉弁8~10を閉じるタイミングを設定する停止時開閉弁制御手段(S11~S13)と、を備える。停止時に、圧力センサ4と第一圧力センサ6と第二圧力センサ7の出力に応じて、設定したタイミングに従って第一~三開閉弁8~10を閉じる。これにより、燃料ガスタンク2と第一容積部11との圧力差および第一容積部11と第二容積部12との圧力差をつけて停止することができるので、停止中に第一開閉弁8、第二開閉弁9からの燃料ガスの漏れを検出することができる。ここでは、特に燃料ガスタンク2と第一容積部11との圧力差および第一容積部11と第二容積部12との圧力差とが同程度になるように設定するので、第一、第二開閉弁8、9の故障を同様に検出することができる。

[0050]

燃料ガスタンク2に貯蔵された燃料ガスの状態に基づいて、停止操作を行うかどうかを決定する停止処理判定部(S1)を備える。これにより、停止操作を行っても、後の故障診断を正確に出来ないような場合には、停止操作・故障診断を避けることができるので、誤

診を避けることができ、また無駄な動作を省略することができる。

[0051]

例えば、燃料ガスタンク2の圧力を測定する圧力センサ4を備え、圧力センサ4の出力が 所定値以上である場合に停止操作を行うと判断する。燃料ガスタンク2内の圧力が低い場合、停止時処理を行っても燃料ガスタンク2および第一、二容積部11、12の圧力との 差が少ないので、燃料ガス漏れがない場合でも環境変化による影響を受け易く、誤って供 給開閉弁の故障と診断してしまうことがある。そこで、燃料ガスタンク2内の圧力が所定 値以上である場合のみに停止処理を行うことで、これを回避することができる。

[0052]

燃料ガスタンク2の圧力を測定する圧力センサ4と、燃料ガスタンク2または燃料ガス供給配管3中の少なくとも一箇所の燃料ガスの温度変化を検出または推測する温度検出手段、ここでは第一温度センサ5を備える。停止後の運転再開直前の燃料ガスの圧力と温度に基づいて、故障診断を行うかどうかを判断する故障診断判定部(S5)と、を備える。これにより、環境の変化等に伴って燃料ガスの状態が著しく変化して、誤診を生じやすくなるような場合には、故障診断を避けることができる。これにより、より正確な故障診断を行うことができる。

[0053]

故障診断判定部(S5)において、前回の停止時における第一温度センサ5の出力と、燃料電池1の運転再開直前における第一温度センサ5の出力との差が、所定値以上の場合には故障診断は行わない。前回停止時の温度に対して、起動時の温度が大きく離れている場合には、第一、第二開閉弁8、9の漏れの状態によらず圧力の変化が大きくなり、誤って故障と判断してしまう可能性がある。そこで、第一温度センサ5の出力が、停止時と起動時とで大きく異なる場合には故障診断を行わないことで、誤診を避けることができる。

[0054]

第一開閉弁8と、第二開閉弁9と、の間に第一温度センサ5を設け、故障診断部(S6)において判断する際に、前回の停止時の第一温度センサ5の出力と、運転再開時の第一温度センサ5の出力と、に基づき圧力補正を行う。これにより、前回停止時の温度に対して起動時の温度が変化している場合でも、圧力の比較を行うことができる。

[0055]

なお、本実施形態では、燃料ガスタンク2を一つのタンクで構成したが、複数のタンクから構成してもよい。そのときには、タンク毎に少なくとも第一開閉弁8、第二開閉弁9を備える。このように構成することで、タンク数にかかわらず開閉弁の故障診断を行うことができる。

[0056]

また、燃料ガスタンク2に燃料ガスが供給されているような場合、例えば、燃料改質システム等を備え、燃料ガスタンク2に燃料ガスが供給されているような場合には、図2のステップS1に示した停止処理判定部を省略することもできる。さらにTGP2が外気圧等のほぼ一定の値の場合には、Pt、P2がほぼ一定値となるので、図5のステップS11~13においてtm1~tm3を求めず、図14においてPt-P1=P1-P2となるtm1~tm3を予め実験等で求めておくこともできる。

[0057]

このように、本発明は上記実施の形態に限定されるわけではなく、特許請求の範囲に記載の技術思想の範囲以内で様々な変更が成し得ることは言うまでもない。

【図面の簡単な説明】

- 【図1】本実施形態における供給開閉弁の故障診断システムの構成図である。
- 【図2】本実施形態における停止処理のフローチャートである。
- 【図3】本実施形態における診断処理のフローチャートである。
- 【図4】本実施形態における停止処理判定のフローチャートである。
- 【図5】本実施形態における停止処理操作のフローチャートである。
- 【図6】本実施形態におけるtm1算出のフローチャートである。

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- 【図7】本実施形態における tm 2 算出のフローチャートである。
- 【図8】図7のフローチャートにおいてtm2を求めるのに用いるマップである。
- 【図9】本実施形態におけるtm3算出のフローチャートである。
- 【図10】本実施形態における停止時記憶処理のフローチャートである。
- 【図11】本実施形態における記憶メモリ呼び出しのフローチャートである。
- 【図12】本実施形態における故障診断判断のフローチャートである。
- 【図13】本実施形態における故障診断のフローチャートである。
- 【図14】本実施形態における停止処理時のタイミングチャートである。

【符号の説明】

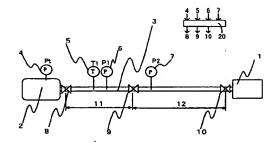
- 1 燃料電池
- 2 燃料ガスタンク
- 3 燃料ガス供給配管
- 4 供給部圧力センサ (圧力センサ)
- 5 第一温度センサ (温度検出手段、第一温度センサ)
- 6 第一圧カセンサ
- 7 第二圧カセンサ
- 8 第一開閉弁
- 9 第二開閉弁
- 10 第三開閉弁
- 20 コントローラ
- S 1 停止処理判定部
- S 3 停止時記憶処理部
- S5 故障診断判定部
- S6 故障診断部
- S14 停止時開閉弁操作部
- S 1 1 ~ 1 3 停止時開閉制御手段

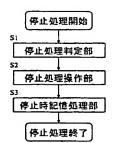
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【図1】

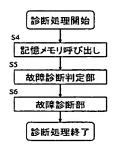
【図2】

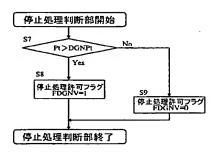




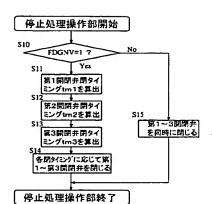
【図3】

【図4】

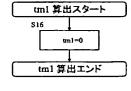




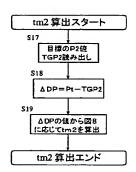
【図5】



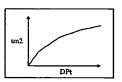
【図6】



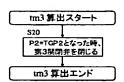
【図7】



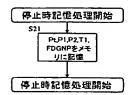
【図8】



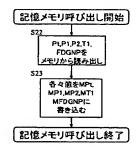
【図9】



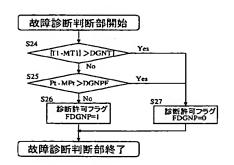
【図10】



【図11】



【図12】



【図13】

【図14】

